

Arizona—innocent—who was exposed to the measles.

I ask that we take this seriously, as a member of the Homeland Security Committee, and find a way to alert parents to make the right decision for their children. I will be continuing to work on this and have asked my own community to send out an alert to help save those children and the others who are vulnerable to the measles outbreak.

SITES RESERVOIR PROJECT

(Mr. LAMALFA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMALFA. Mr. Speaker, as California enters what looks like its fourth year of a severe drought, we need to take action so that when we do finally get rain once again, we will be able to store it.

Sites Reservoir is a project that has been talked about for many, many years in northern California that would store nearly 2 million acre-feet of water in its best possible configuration. So we need to take that action. A little bit later on in this session, we will be introducing legislation to authorize that.

We also need help from the Bureau of Reclamation in putting the funding forward to finish the feasibility studies that are necessary to go from talk, from dream, to getting construction going and having the water reservoirs that we need for California to stave off drought in the future years.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by welcoming our new members and by thanking the gentlewoman from Ohio, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, for her leadership of the Congressional Black Caucus during the 113th Congress. Thanks to her dedication and tireless work, this caucus is better positioned to address the diverse challenges of the African American community.

I also want to thank the new CBC chair, the Honorable Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD of North Carolina. I am confident that he will do a great job leading this caucus with steadfast commitment to justice and to building an America that works for everyone.

Let me also thank my counterpart, the Honorable Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY, for joining me in leading the CBC Special Orders this year. I am truly honored to take on this new role, and I look forward to working with her as we help carry out the critical mission of this caucus.

Mr. Speaker, 50 years ago, in the midst of the civil rights movement, hundreds of brave men and women gathered in Selma, Alabama, to begin a long, arduous march to Montgomery in support of the fundamental truth: that every American, regardless of what they look like, has the right to vote.

□ 1930

On March 7, 1965, 600 men and women set out from Selma following the death of 26-year-old Jimmie Lee Jackson, a deacon from Marion, Alabama, who died from gunshot wounds inflicted by a State trooper at a nonviolent demonstration.

Theirs was a peaceful, nonviolent march, but it was met with fierce brutality. It would take the marchers two more attempts to arrive at Montgomery; but on March 25, after a 12-day journey, they did arrive.

Since that day, our country has made significant strides in achieving equality and justice for all, but significant challenges remain unmet. Tonight, we will examine where we have come from, where we are, and where we would like to go as a society. We must be ready to go.

In 1965, Selma became the focal point of voter registration efforts in the South. At the time, only 2 percent of the city's eligible African American voters had been able to register. The impact of Selma to the Montgomery march was profound.

As Dr. King said, "Selma produced the voting rights legislation of 1965." The Voting Rights Act of 1965 banned discriminatory voting requirements that disenfranchised African American voters throughout this country; yet, today, the dream of full equality is still something many African Americans can only dream of.

Where we are, nearly 6 years after the end of the recession, people still struggle to find work, and the gap between the rich and poor continues to grow. For African Americans, this situation is severe, given the disproportionate effect of unemployment on our communities.

At the same time, there remains widespread poverty, a defining challenge of our time. This persistent economic inequality threatens to undercut the gains that African American communities have made, and it undermines the idea of economic mobility, the idea that if you work hard in this country and have ambition, you can get ahead. The economic crisis is not only facing African American communities.

Where we are in education, education is the most important economic investment we can make now and for future generations; yet, across the country,

we still have seen cuts to education at all levels and attacks on critical programs like Head Start and Pell grants.

These attacks undermine the ability of African Americans to get ahead—that is why I strongly support President Obama's new, bold initiative for free access to community colleges—so, too, do efforts to dismantle social safety net programs which our communities depend on. Those efforts are irresponsible, unjust, and contrary to who we are as Americans.

The Congressional Black Caucus will make criminal justice reform a centerpiece of our agenda. We will work to reduce the epidemic of poverty in this country. We will work to create educational opportunities for African American children, and we will support efforts to strengthen our 105 Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

The CBC also remains committed to fighting against efforts to dismantle the social safety net. We are determined to restore section 5 of the Voting Rights Act and to make sure everyone, regardless of what they look like or where they come from, has equal access to the polls, and we resolve to ensure that increasing diversity in this Nation is reflected in American corporations.

Together, these policies will bring us closer as a nation where we are empowering the communities of African Americans, and they will benefit from the full equality and live the American Dream. There is no doubt that we are in difficult times in this Nation.

Injustices are widespread and threaten some of our most fundamental rights, but we will find no answers in apathy, no comfort in complacency. As we always have, we will continue the march for progress, for freedom, for justice, and for equality for all.

Mr. Speaker, it is my honor and privilege now that I yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from Illinois, Ms. ROBIN KELLY.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Thank you, my friend from New Jersey. It is an honor to host with you this year. I am excited about the work ahead for the CBC in the 114th Congress. I also want to acknowledge the great job that Congressman Horsford and Congressman JEFFRIES did in hosting the Special Order hour in the 113th Congress. I also want to honor our past chair, Congresswoman MARCIA FUDGE, for all of her great work.

Discussing 50 years from Selma, where we were, where we are, and where we are headed, I expect this to be very stimulating, frustrating, and rewarding all at the same time. It remains that we have a lot of work to do.

Mr. PAYNE. I thank the gentlewoman.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, it is my honor and privilege for the first time in the 114th Congress to have the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus, G.K. BUTTERFIELD, address us, and I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

The Congressional Black Caucus is delighted to come to the floor this evening to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

At the end of slavery, Mr. Speaker, in 1865, which was 150 years ago, the State of North Carolina had a slave population of 331,000 slaves. After the passage of the 13th Amendment and ratification of it by 27 States, these slaves became free. They became American citizens, and males 21 years old or older would soon be entitled to vote.

Among those 331,000 slaves gaining freedom, 128,000 of them resided in my congressional district. In some of the counties, the Black population exceeded the White population.

In 1870, African American citizens gained the right to vote by the enactment of the 15th Amendment. For the next 30 years, Mr. Speaker, African American men voted in large numbers and became a political force in State politics.

Four African Americans were elected to Congress in North Carolina, eight in South Carolina, three in Alabama, and one each in Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Virginia, and Louisiana. Many more were elected to State and local office.

In 1900, after KKK violence and lynchings had not deterred Black political participation, most Southern States passed disfranchisement laws requiring a literacy test and the payment of a poll tax. These laws had the intent and effect of disenfranchising Black people from voting, and it worked. For the next half century, African Americans were effectively denied the right to vote with a few exceptions.

Following his 1964 acceptance of the Nobel Peace Prize, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., approached President Lyndon Johnson about advocating for a strong voting rights law that would enforce the 15th Amendment. President Johnson was uncomfortable in advancing the idea of a voting rights law, which greatly disappointed Dr. King. Dr. King was motivated to launch the Selma voting rights movement.

On March 7, 1965, under the leadership of Dr. King, JOHN LEWIS, and others, Black residents of Selma attempted to march from Brown Chapel Church to the Alabama State capital to demand a voting rights law.

As they approached the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the marchers were brutalized, and they were terrorized by State police and forced to retreat. We now refer to this confrontation as “Bloody Sunday.”

Two days later, the marchers again began their journey to Montgomery, but as they crossed the bridge and saw the strong police presence, they turned around and returned to the church. At this point, President Johnson was outraged with Governor George Wallace for preventing the march. Johnson telephoned Wallace to demand that the marchers walk to Montgomery without incident.

Three weeks later, on March 21, 1965, Dr. King persuaded thousands of Black and White to come to Selma to participate in the march. The march proceeded without incident. Fifty thousand participated.

Following the March, a White marcher, Mrs. Viola Liuzzo from Detroit, was murdered while transporting marchers back to Selma. Jimmie Lee Jackson was killed by police during a Selma protest in February 1965. Saddened by these murders, President Johnson reconsidered his unwillingness to promote voting rights legislation. He went on national television on March 15 and announced that he would support a voting rights bill.

Despite the Southern filibuster, the Voting Rights Act was enacted into law on August 6, 1965. This important law has changed the political landscape for African American communities. It bans the use of literacy tests. It gives minority communities the right to litigate discriminatory election schemes that dilute their vote.

The act provides for a section 5 that requires certain jurisdictions with discriminatory histories to preclear election law changes with the Attorney General. To our great dismay, on June 25, 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court made section 5 unenforceable because the data used to determine covered jurisdictions is outdated, according to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has now called on Congress to modify the formula.

To this day, Mr. Speaker, our Republican colleagues have refused to allow the bipartisan VRA amendment bill to be voted upon. In fact, the chairman of the Judiciary Committee, Mr. GOODLATTE, announced that he has no intention to legislate a modification to the formula, and so the effect of not having section 5 is to allow jurisdictions to pass discriminatory election laws with impunity and without oversight.

The Voting Rights Act has enabled African American communities to elect hundreds of Black elected officials. We successfully litigated dozens and dozens of cases. Many of my colleagues were elected because enforcement of the Voting Rights Act forced—States to draw congressional districts where Black communities are not submerged and their vote diluted.

Mr. Speaker, this story must be understood by every American citizen. The right to vote for African Americans was obtained by blood, sweat, and tears; and we are determined—the Congressional Black Caucus is determined—to continue this fight into 2016 and beyond.

Mr. PAYNE, thank you very much for yielding time.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are looking forward to your leadership in the 114th Congress, and we will continue to strive to make sure that the issues that the CBC find important are relevant on the day-to-day basis.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLY-

BURN), the leader, who has probably forgotten more about the goings-on and the rules in this Chamber than I will ever know.

Mr. CLYBURN. Thank you so much, Mr. PAYNE, for yielding me time. I appreciate your accolades, and I promise you that my long, distant memory is getting very good, but I assure you that your contributions to this great body are very much appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I opened up Black History Month with a speech at Cornerstone Baptist Church on Wayne Street in Columbia, South Carolina. They had an interesting topic for me to develop. It was all about remembering our past and preparing for the future.

Chairman BUTTERFIELD has talked a little bit about the past that many of us remember, but 50 years after Selma, we must turn to the question that Martin Luther King, Jr., asked in one of his great books: Where do we go from here, chaos or community?

Statistics show that there are nearly 500 counties and thousands of communities in the United States that are classified by the United States Census Bureau as persistent poverty areas. They are so defined because 20 percent of their populations have lived below the poverty level for the past 30 years or more.

□ 1945

They are diverse, including Caucasian communities in States like West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee; Native American communities in States like South Dakota, Alaska, and Oklahoma; Latino communities in States like Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas; and African American communities in States like South Carolina, Alabama, and Mississippi. They are urban communities in States like New York and heartland communities in States like Missouri. 139 of these counties are represented in this body by Democrats; 331 of these counties are represented in this body by Republicans; and 18 of these counties are split between the two parties. Combating persistent poverty should matter to all of us, regardless of party, geography, or race.

In early 2009, when we were putting together the Recovery Act, I proposed language to require that at least 10 percent of funds in three rural development accounts be directed to efforts in these persistent-poverty counties. This requirement was enacted into law. In light of the definition of persistent-poverty counties as having at least 20 percent poverty rates over 30 years, the provision became known as the 10-20-30 initiative.

This initiative bore dividends as economic development projects proliferated in persistent poverty communities across the country. Using the 10-20-30 formula, the Recovery Act funded a total of 4,655 projects in persistent-poverty counties, totaling nearly \$1.7 billion. I saw firsthand the positive effects of these projects in my district.

We were able to undertake projects to create jobs that would have otherwise languished. Among those investments was a \$5.8 million grant and a \$2 million loan to construct 51 miles of water lines in the little community of Brittons Neck in Marion County, South Carolina. There are many other success stories.

In Lowndes County, Mississippi, \$17.5 million was spent to install a water line, elevated tank, and two wastewater pump stations, providing potable water to rural Mississippians and creating badly needed construction jobs.

The Wellborn Special Utility District in Brazos County, Texas, received a \$538,000 loan to construct more than 9 miles of new water distribution lines and connect over 60 households to a new water system.

In 2011, I joined with our former Republican colleague, Representative Jo Ann Emerson of Missouri, to introduce an amendment to the continuing resolution that would have continued 10-20-30 for rural development and expanded it to 11 additional accounts throughout the Federal Government affecting economic development, education, job training, health, justice, the environment, and more.

I want to make one thing clear about the 10-20-30 approach. It does not—I repeat, it does not—add one dime to the deficit. It simply targets resources from funds already authorized or appropriated.

Over the past 30 years, the national economy has risen and fallen multiple times. During each economic downturn, while we have been rightly focused on getting the economy as a whole back on track, we have not given adequate attention to these communities that are suffering from chronic distress and Depression-era levels of joblessness.

As a result, they have suffered even in good economic times. The 10-20-30 approach would provide a mechanism to address this deprivation in times of want and in times of plenty, in times of Federal investment and in times of fiscal austerity.

Last year, I wrote an essay on 10-20-30 which was published in the Harvard Journal on Legislation. I discussed the history of our Nation's efforts to address chronic poverty and more fully laid out the case for broadly implementing 10-20-30 in a bipartisan fashion.

Mr. Speaker, as we begin to put our 2016 budget together, I look forward to working with all Members in this body on both sides of the aisle irrespective of what State or county you may represent. I look forward to working together so that we can make a real productive legacy for Selma and we can move forward and answer Dr. King's question "Chaos or community?" with a resounding: We are building communities.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. CLYBURN. As in the past, the Congressional Black Caucus will work to

continue to reduce the epidemic of poverty in this country. When over 45 million Americans live below the poverty line, we are failing as a nation. As Congressman BUTTERFIELD said earlier this month, the CBC will advocate the Clyburn 10-20-30 plan, which redirects at least 10 percent of an agency's grants in its discretionary budget to communities where at least 20 percent of the population has lived below the poverty line for the past 30 years. These are the issues that we will continue to work on as members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

It is now my honor to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), one of my mentors since before I arrived in Congress, a former friend of my father's and a great colleague.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I wish I had a prepared statement, but I was so moved after listening and being a part of this great congressional group in this great country to be able to celebrate 50 years since the Voting Rights Act.

As a kid who grew up on the streets of Lenox Avenue and dropped out of high school, I didn't have the benefit of having anything to attach a dream to that would allow me to believe that one day I could be sitting in the United States House of Representatives.

But after returning from the war in Korea and after being the beneficiary of the GI bill, and after graduating from law school, I was able to see and hear atrocities that have been committed on Black folks in this country the likes of which I had not seen except during wartime. And even though my mother's family came from Virginia, in the city of New York even today I don't ever remember meeting any White people from the South. I don't know what that is. Perhaps Congressman BUTTERFIELD may be able to do some historical research about why they stayed in the South and didn't come to New York City, where racism had a sugar coating to it. They didn't use dogs and bombs and things of that nature. But I recall so vividly seeing people like Andy Young and especially our dear friend and colleague, JOHN LEWIS, be prepared to put their lives on the line for our country, not for themselves.

In Korea and in most wars, people fight to stay alive and they don't voluntarily put their life on the line, as JOHN LEWIS and others have done. But what happened was, when they had the first Selma march, what we refer to as Bloody Sunday, years before our beloved Congresswoman was born, I saw something that really pained me as an American rather than as a human being. And then they had the second march from Selma to Montgomery and Dr. King pulled that back, and then we had the plea for people from all over the country to come down for the third march. I recalled before, I had bad feet and wasn't thinking about going to Selma to do 54 miles, but the inspiration to see people that had been pre-

pared to put their life on the line for me and others like me could not allow me to return to New York.

It is very interesting that I have to admit publicly that when I heard the voice of Lyndon Johnson coming across on radio and television saying, "We shall overcome," I kind of thought, TERRI, that those were our words. And if a White person was to say it, I never expected to find that accent of the very people that sounded as though they were part of a conspiracy to keep children of slaves from assimilating into the constitutional beliefs that we had since learned to live by and enjoy and hope for.

What an historic moment that was. What a revolutionary period that was, because as we review that and look at the picture "Selma," we wonder where did all of the people that represented this hatred go, the people who stood in the way of people registering voters; the people who took advantage of the idea that just because of their complexion they were superior; the people that belonged to the Ku Klux Klan; the people who used religion as a sword instead of a shield? Did they disappear? What happened to the so-called Dixiecrats?

But then I am reminded that as a result of the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act that they didn't go very far, that they threw down their party label but they stayed in the same places, and many of them are doing the same thing—trying to continue to prevent people of color from enjoying their full constitutional voting rights.

Then when I was honored enough to come down here in 1971 with half a dozen Congressional Black Caucus members, nine, who joined with four of us who had decided to form the Congressional Black Caucus, you could not believe, Congressman PAYNE, how it was never our dream that that small group would go from 13 to 26 to 40 to 46 to 47, and reach the historic impact on our policy and on our Nation, a group that had no intention of doing anything except to introduce, create, and support policies that could make this great country even stronger for all of us. And true, we have a lot of obstacles to overcome, but I don't think any group of people have been as successful as we have in coming from the pits of slavery in such a short period of time as we are now, and to see how much more work we have to do so that one day our children and our grandchildren will say: Why did they have to have a Congressional Black Caucus? Why wasn't it just a Democratic caucus? Why did we need it?

□ 2000

Well, because of the intellect, the commitment of individual members of the Black Caucus, like the rest of the Congress, that come from all walks of life and they got here to make this a better country, a more effective Congress, soon and very soon, we may hear those words: Why were we needed?

Until we accomplish these lofty goals, thank God that we have had it.

I think that the Democrats appreciate the work that we are trying to do, and one day, as so many people who got rid of their sheets, their children and their grandchildren would see that we only were trying to eliminate the pain for all people, regardless of color, to make the red, white, and blue, rather than just whether you are Black or White, become the theme that the fathers of this Constitution should have been striving for.

There is no question in my mind that the things we stand for really and what the country is committed to do, and I am so proud of these last couple of years, that there is not a group of people I would rather spend my time with than with my friends and my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. PAYNE. I thank the gentleman from New York. His kind thoughts and perspective is always, always needed in this House.

Now, I have the honor and the privilege of yielding to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL), who represents the city, the town, that is on everybody's breath over the last couple of months.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the CBC for this Special Order hour, and I commend my colleague from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and my colleague from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for choosing such a great topic for tonight's Special Order hour.

Selma, Lord, Selma. I have the great pleasure of standing before you not only as a Representative who represents the great city of Selma but as a native of Selma, Alabama, and a lifelong member of the historic Brown Chapel AME Church.

I know that the journey I now take, the journey that many others who are here today take, was only made possible because of the courage, fortitude, and determination of those brave men and women on that bridge, Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965.

We who have the privilege and honor of taking this journey must ask ourselves: What will we do to extend the legacy? What will we do to protect the legacy?

Selma is the soul of America. It is the place where the struggle for civil rights and voting rights began, the epicenter, if you will, of the voting rights movement.

It deserves to be more than just a footnote in the history books. It deserves to take up chapters in the history books, the tactical and strategic voices of Martin Luther King and those brave men and women of SCLC and SNCC that had the fortitude and had the intellect to see this as a strategy, to know that they were speaking not only for themselves and their children, but for future generations.

Only a true visionary could defeat such opposition with little more than a dream, and Dr. King held so tightly to

his that it forced our country to become a more equal and just nation.

Some want to forget the painful past. I know many in my district and many in my city would like to forget our painful past, but we cannot turn the pages as if certain chapters were never written; nor can we celebrate how far we have come without first acknowledging where we have been. Bloody Sunday forced America to confront its own inhumanity. Our painful past has ushered in a new day.

As I tell my constituents, out of our painful past came the birth of a movement that changed a nation, and from that movement came a human rights movement that changed a world. If we don't write our own history, others will tell it for us, and they may not be so kind, they may not tell our history the way we would tell our history.

My father grew up in Selma, as did I, and the Selma of my childhood was very, very different than the Selma of my father's childhood. There has been progress. My father went to segregated schools in Selma. My father drank from "colored only" fountains in Selma. My father's mother never got the chance to vote, though she tried to register several times.

The Selma that I grew up in had an integrated public high school, a public high school that was 55 percent African American and 45 percent White. Yes, across town, there was an all-White private school.

I want you to know that the Selma I grew up in, in the seventies and eighties, it produced me as its first Black valedictorian of Selma High School. I know that Selma and the journey that we all take now because of Selma was only made possible because of the bravery of others.

As I stood to give my speech as a valedictorian in 1982 at Selma High School, I remember standing up and saying:

Maybe one day I could join the likes of a Charlie Rangel, of a John Lewis, in the House of Congress.

I said it as a pious, overly confident teenager probably, but I said it with every vigor because I believed in my heart that I could be and do anything. Why? Because the people of that community nurtured me, Black and White, my teachers, my Girl Scout troop leaders, my Sunday school teachers.

Yes, I had proud parents who were educators, educated at Alabama State University, and because of their education at this wonderful quality institution of higher learning, I had a chance to go to Princeton—but I had more than that. I had an obligation to give back, to make sure that others had an opportunity to walk through those same doors. It wasn't enough to be the first.

In fact, I was most proud 5 years after I graduated from Princeton that April Williams from Selma High School got to go to Princeton. I must have done something right.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 would have never been possible had it not

been for the intellect, the mind of these wonderful leaders, some known. All of us know about the contributions of our colleague, JOHN LEWIS; all of us know about the contributions of the SCLC, Andy Young, and Martin Luther King.

Some unknown, like my sixth grade teacher, Mrs. Richie Jean Jackson, she was featured in the movie "Selma" because it was her home, the home that she shared with Dr. Jackson, the first Black dentist in Selma, that housed Martin Luther King and Andrew Young and all those leaders every time they came to Selma because they couldn't stay at the all-White hotel.

Mrs. Jackson was my sixth grade teacher. Mrs. Jackson did not live to see the movie "Selma," but I am proud that this body is seeking to provide a Congressional Gold Medal to the foot soldiers of the movement, so that the Richie Jacksons, Mrs. Jacksons of the world, who had the bravery to go and be on that bridge Bloody Sunday or Turnaround Tuesday or the ultimate final march from Selma to Montgomery, that they are acknowledged by this Nation for the sacrifices that they made.

In closing, I want to remind my colleagues of my guest at the State of the Union, January 20, 2015. My special guest was the 103-year-old Amelia Boynton.

Amelia Boynton was characterized in the movie "Selma" as the proud African American woman who told Coretta Scott King:

You are prepared. You are the descendants of kings and queens. Your heritage is one and your bloodline is one that survived slave ships. You are prepared.

Amelia Boynton is known for her bravery that Bloody Sunday when she was bludgeoned, but she came back 2 days later on Turnaround Tuesday and continued to fight in Selma long after this march from Selma to Montgomery.

She honored us with her presence, and as person after person came up to her and kissed her on the cheek and said, "Miss Boynton, I stand on your shoulders today, thank you," Miss Boynton said something very poignant. She said, "Everybody keeps talking about being on my shoulders. I tell them, Get off my shoulders, do your own work, there is plenty of work to be done." I want to remind my colleagues that there is plenty of work for us still to do.

I want to honor the legacy of Amelia Boynton, F.D. Reese, JOHN LEWIS, and so many; but we cannot honor their legacy without acknowledging that the Voting Rights Act of 1965, major sections of it, have been invalidated.

We owe it to that legacy, the legacy and memory of those who fought so valiantly, that this body should once again work together to make sure that Federal protections are there because, as we know, progress is always elusive, all battles become new again, and there is a renewed assault on voting.

It may not be counting how many jelly beans are in a jar or how many county judges there are in the State of Alabama; but, nevertheless, we still have modern-day barriers to voting that we must overcome.

I hope that we have the courage of our own convictions to see the movie “Selma” as a beginning of a national conversation about how we can continue to recommit ourselves to the ideals that were fought on that Bloody Sunday. I know that if we combined our hearts and our minds, both sides of the aisle will see that it is in everyone’s best interest that all Americans have the right to vote.

I thank my colleagues of the CBC for having this Special Order hour. I invite all of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to come to Selma, to experience the living history, and I hope that we will all come away from the 50th commemoration of the march from Selma to Montgomery with a renewed vigor to once again provide Federal protection for all Americans to exercise that sacred right to vote.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

□ 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this is a very important evening. I thank my colleagues, both Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey and Ms. KELLY, for, first of all, taking up a very important challenge of being able to lead the members of the Congressional Black Caucus through this period of challenge to America.

I am reflective of the number of Members who have had the chance to convey their thoughts, and each one I thank personally: our chairman, Mr. G.K. BUTTERFIELD, for his leadership and his internal knowledge from his walk in life of the civil rights journey; Mr. CLYBURN for living and understanding the civil rights journey and conveying it in his legislative journey; Mr. RANGEL for his service to this Nation as a Korean war vet and then coming home to be a vet of the civil rights effort; then, of course, the holder of the seat who represents Selma for her life story.

Today, I rise to ask the question, What is our moral standard? And, following the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, why we can’t wait.

This is a clarion call to my colleagues—Democrats and Republicans—that, in fact, this year—of all years—calls for us to act. It calls for us to be able to understand why the Nation cannot wait and who is going to lift up the moral standard.

The walk from Selma to Montgomery turned into Bloody Sunday. It was where a young man by the name of JOHN LEWIS stood bravely alongside names like Hosea Williams. It was, of course, a place where the world watched, and it became the stair steps on which the Voting Rights Act was passed.

Today, we realize that, on the shoulders of that tragic time, violence claimed the life of Jimmie Lee Jackson, beaten by State troopers as he was attempting to protect his mother and others, and that violence claimed the lives of Reverend James Reeb of Boston and of Viola Liuzzo of Detroit at that time as she returned from the Selma march—a time when 25,000 strong or more marched across the Montgomery bridge.

We understand that our job is yet not done. In the wake of the decision by the Supreme Court that crippled the Voting Rights Act, we as members of the Judiciary Committee, led by our colleagues Mr. CLYBURN and JOHN CONYERS, sought to correct that crippling.

Today, I stand and ask my chairman and the Speaker of the House to have us put that fix with the new Members, our Republicans and Democrats—the same body of individuals who President Johnson convened—to be able to ensure that that Voting Rights Act of 1965 could be done. It is important to note that we not allow the efforts to go unnoted.

Mr. Speaker, the voter ID law in Texas needs to be corrected by passing the Voting Rights Amendment Act. The terrible oppression of individuals in their walks to the polls has to be corrected by this amendment. Of course, we must ensure against the horrors of wealth inequality. The median income of Black households is \$33,764—a mere 60 percent of the median income for White households.

Then, of course, we must move to criminal justice reform. I am privileged, Mr. Speaker, to serve as the ranking member on the Crime Subcommittee, and I join my colleagues in the commitment to ensure that we, in fact, answer the call of the mothers of so many, such as those of Trayvon Martin, Sean Bell, Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Bobby Tolan, Jordan Baker, and many others, that we have grand jury reform, special prosecutor reform, prison reform—the transitioning of nonviolent offenders to productive lives—law enforcement training and best practices.

Yes, the bill that I introduced, the Build TRUST Act, will not give incentives to towns that rely upon racial profiling and on stopping African Americans and other minorities to build their revenue.

Mr. Speaker, tonight, I have the opportunity to remind us that our walk is not done in wealth inequality, in criminal justice reform and, as I know that my colleague Mr. GREEN will mention, in the body cameras. All of these—closing the wealth gap and passing the Voting Rights Act—are challenges not to Democrats, not to minorities; they are to the Nation, to our Republicans and our Democrats.

So I answer the question why we cannot wait: because Dr. King left us a prophetic message and a mountain to climb to get to the promised land.

Tonight, as I close, I call upon all aspects of the beloved community that

JOHN LEWIS so often speaks of—the youth who continue to persist in the streets of America, indicating that Black lives and all lives matter; women, the impoverished, the faith community, workers, and many others whose names I have left out. Today, I ask for them to join hands and march in the month of March in your own cities and hamlets and counties on an agenda of healing, justice, and equality in commemoration of the march of those who crossed on that bloody day but of those who crossed as well successfully from Selma to Montgomery.

Do not sit in your seats. Do not sit in your homes. March in the month of March. Let me hear your voices. Let us see you. Let us join you. You call us, and we will join you in those marches to make a difference in this Nation. I ask for that to all of my colleagues tonight.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you.

I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Thank you, Mr. PAYNE.

Mr. Speaker, because time is of the essence, please allow me to get right to my message.

Where were we in 1965? I will relate this to Congress. In 1965, when they crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, there were five African American Members of Congress. Now there are 48. In 1965, there were four Latino Members of Congress. Now there are 38. There were three Asian Americans in Congress. Now we have a total of 14. There were 14 women in Congress. We now have 104.

Where were we? We were at a point in our history when it was turning for us, but it was a bloody point in our history because, when President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act, he signed it in ink, but it was written in blood. It was written in the blood of the people who crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, in the blood of the people who lived and died so that some of us could have these opportunities to serve in the Congress of the United States of America. That is where we were.

We have progressed. We have more Members of Congress, but in a true sense, it is back to the future because we have seen the evisceration of section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which emasculated section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, meaning you don’t have any States or any territories under section 4 so you cannot preclear them under section 5. We are now back to a point wherein we have to find a way to revitalize and to reinstate section 4 of the Voting Rights Act.

I am sorry that the time has run out, but I do want to say this: if we with only five Members of Congress could get a Voting Rights Act passed, one would think that with 48 we can get it reinstated.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, along with my colleagues of the Congressional Black Caucus,

to recognize the lasting legacy of the Selma marches. 50 years ago, Dr. Martin Luther King, Stokely Carmichael, Congressman JOHN LEWIS, and a number of other fearless fighters, led the historic marches from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama in protest of discriminatory voting laws.

In the years prior to the Selma marches, less than 1% of the black voting age population was registered to vote in Dallas County, where Selma is located. However, more than 80% of Dallas County blacks lived below the poverty line. Various efforts to get blacks in Dallas County registered to vote were met physical violence and economic intimidation. But with the local leadership of the Dallas County Voters League, and the help of two national organizations, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the Student Non-violence Coordinating Committee, the Selma marches were born.

During the first march from Selma to Montgomery, in what would become known as “Bloody Sunday,” the nation watched in horror as African Americans were brutally beaten by police officers, attacked by dogs, and sprayed by fire hoses. Their courage, in the face of dehumanizing treatment from law enforcement, thrust the issue of segregation and race relations in the Deep South into the national consciousness. It led to President Lyndon B. Johnson presenting to a joint session of Congress what would become the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the most important piece of civil rights legislation in the history of this country.

50 years later, the images of “Bloody Sunday” are permanently etched into our Nation’s history as a deep and painful reminder of the struggles we triumphantly conquered to get to where we are today. And yet, the deaths of Michael Brown and Eric Garner, at the hands of law enforcement, serve as tragic reminders that we still have so far to go.

The work of Selma is not finished. The work of Dr. King, Stokely Carmichael, and Congressman LEWIS is not finished. But we must remain encouraged and faithful for the progress still left to achieve. While the discriminatory voting laws of the 1960s are no more, we have encountered a new brand of voter disenfranchisement in 2015 that poses a serious threat to the electoral process. And once again, the great citizens of this nation must fight to protect their constitutional right to vote. It is with the painful lessons learned from the marches on Selma, and with the same tenacity and fearlessness that we will continue to fight this battle today.

SELMA TO MONTGOMERY VOTING RIGHTS MARCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACARTHUR). Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) for 30 minutes.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my other colleagues tonight to thank Congresswoman KELLY from Illinois and Congressman PAYNE from New Jersey for organizing tonight’s Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

I rise to highlight a pivotal moment in America’s history—the Selma voting rights march—that 50 years ago, Mr. Speaker, brought together Americans

to march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, across the now famous Edmund Pettus Bridge. There were attacks and dogs, beatings and deaths, but still we marched because we as a country knew that all Americans should have the same rights. The 54-mile walk was an effort to demonstrate the desire of Black American citizens to exercise their constitutional right to vote and to be treated equally.

Mr. Speaker, although the Civil Rights Act of 1964 legally desegregated the South, discrimination and segregation remained throughout much of the United States. The march led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which, today, continues to be eroded in a threatened bill. The communities across our Nation certainly have threats to their basic rights, and there are certainly injustices. In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King—and they still ring true today when I think about his words—“injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” When I reflect on my recent trip to Ferguson—where I witnessed firsthand—it seems that we are still reengaging in our unfortunate history and ongoing challenges with voting rights, voter registration, and injustices—and with new vitality and vigor.

Mr. Speaker, I will stand with my colleagues—those who are here, along with Congressman JOHN LEWIS and Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL—when we march across that bridge and when we say that we must turn our march toward solutions. If we, Democrats and Republicans, can watch a movie together about Selma, sharing silent moments in tears, sharing stories of our own experiences, surely we can come together to fix voting rights. How long must we wait, Mr. Speaker? How long will it take?

Let me end with these words: it is on all of us here in this body to march for voting rights and to march for having voting rights.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. I would like to thank the gentlewoman from Ohio for her important remarks.

As we come to a close, I thank the distinguished gentleman from the Garden State—my good friend, Representative DONALD PAYNE—for his tremendous leadership and for leading this Congressional Black Caucus Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, in our hour of power, we have had the opportunity to speak directly to the American people. This is a privilege that I take seriously and a responsibility that the CBC cherishes.

Tonight, we strengthen our future by embracing our past. 2015 represents a critical junction in the advancement of our Nation. Fifty years after the Selma to Montgomery march there are strengthened civil rights and improved access to the ballot. Today, we find ourselves with equally important ground to cover in promoting civil rights, in reducing economic and

health disparities, and in strengthening voter rights protection.

As a legislative body, we have made progress, but as Representatives and as men and women who love this country, our work continues. As we look back, we are comforted by the bridges we have crossed, by the trails we have blazed, and by the future ahead of us that we envision.

I want to thank the entire Congressional Black Caucus, especially my fellow coanchor, the gentleman from New Jersey, Congressman PAYNE.

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Fifty years after Selma, the CBC remembers that it exists to promote the public welfare through legislation that meets the needs of millions of neglected citizens. It is that spirit that guides us and many others in Congress.

When we see millions of men, women, and children who need help moving forward, we march. When we see obstruction in our path to creating a more perfect Union, we respond.

Again, I thank my colleagues.

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, at this time I would like to allow my colleague, Congresswoman YVETTE CLARKE from Brooklyn, who is also the vice president of the Congressional Black Caucus, to share her thoughts with us.

(Ms. CLARKE of New York asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARKE of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY) for extending this time to me, and I want to also thank the gentlelady from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues in the Congressional Black Caucus for hosting this evening’s Special Order and this extension this evening.

Today I proudly rise to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the historic events of the nonviolent protests that took place in Selma, Alabama, and to recognize their importance in igniting and fueling the civil rights movement that brought an end to the practice of Jim Crow racial segregation by law in America and voting rights legislation that guaranteed every American citizen the right to vote.

It is a privilege to represent the Ninth District of New York in offering tribute to the historic people of conscience that walked the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 7, 1965, known as Bloody Sunday. The march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965 included more than 600 women and men who walked from the historic Brown Chapel AME Church to the State capital of Alabama.

They marched for the right to vote, the freedom and human dignity that had been denied to them. They marched to end the evil practice of segregation and the violent terrorism to which they were subjected on an everyday basis, to remove from our society